

Vikki Howells AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch
Minister for Further and Higher Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1486
Ein cyf/Our ref VH/10071/24

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

05 November 2024

Dear Carolyn

Thank you for your letter of 16 October to Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education, regarding '*Petition P-06-1486 Grant BN(O) Hong Kong students home fee status after three years of residence*'. I am responding as ministerial responsibility for further and higher education resides with me.

Matters of residency and immigration are complex and eligibility for student support and tuition fee protections are governed by legislation. Care is always taken to ensure eligibility for those resident in Wales is as fair as possible, and policy is under continual review. Our legislation ensures a wide range of students are eligible. However, not all persons with leave to enter or remain are eligible. In general terms, eligible persons are those who have settled status in the UK, EU nationals with either settled or pre-settled status, refugees, and certain persons with leave to enter or remain, and their family members.

I am able to inform you that we are reviewing the position with respect to holders of the HKBN(O) visa. This will include a review of eligibility for both tuition fee protections and student support. Our review will take place ahead of the 2026/27 academic year. There are no plans to make those with this visa eligible any earlier than 2026/27, and eligibility thereafter is subject to our review findings. Holders of this visa will in any event become eligible once they are settled in the UK after five years.

Yours sincerely,

Vikki Howells AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch
Minister for Further and Higher Education

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.